



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

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News Release

California man convicted of smuggling 8 illegal aliens from Los Angeles to Oklahoma

OKLAHOMA CITY — A Los Angeles man was convicted in federal court here on Friday for transporting eight illegal aliens from the Los Angeles area through Oklahoma. John C. Richter, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Oklahoma, made the announcement today. The case was investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

A federal jury convicted Jose Angel Lopez-Lozoya, 32, from Paramount, Calif., of eight counts of transporting illegal aliens from Los Angeles to Oklahoma.

“This case demonstrates that trafficking of aliens is an organized underground business that preys upon desperate people,” said U.S. Attorney John C. Richter. “We will continue to work with ICE to aggressively prosecute those who seek to profit from trafficking in illegal aliens.”

“Knowingly transporting illegal aliens is a felony punishable by up to five years in prison,” said John Chakwin, special agent-in-charge for the ICE Office of Investigations in Dallas. “Working with many local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, ICE is committed to identifying and dismantling these illegal underground transportation organizations, and prosecuting those involved.”

Evidence at trial showed that Lopez and his fiancée, co-defendant Brandy Lee Beverly, 23, also of Paramount, Calif., were stopped on April 26, by the North Enid Police Department for speeding in a school zone in North Enid. Suspecting that Beverly and Lopez were transporting illegal aliens, the North Enid PD notified ICE, which began an investigation. The illegal aliens being transported included two from Honduras and six from Mexico. These passengers testified that they arranged for their trips to various cities after finding ads in Spanish-language newspapers in Los Angeles and through business cards advertising transportation. They further testified that Lopez and Beverly drove them in a van from Los Angeles to jobs waiting in Tulsa, Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana, and were going to pay \$400 to \$650 for their transportation.

The trial lasted five days and the jury deliberated about four hours before finding Lopez guilty on all eight counts. Lopez faces a sentence on each count of up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. A sentencing hearing before Judge Vicki Miles-LaGrange will be set in about 60 to 90 days.

The eight passengers face removal hearings in Immigration Court.

Co-defendant Beverly previously pleaded guilty to misprision of a felony and is facing a maximum of three years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

The case is the result of an investigation by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and was part of the Secure Border Initiative (SBI), a comprehensive multi-year plan by the Department of Homeland Security to secure America's borders and reduce illegal migration. Under SBI, Homeland Security seeks to gain operational control of both the northern and southern borders, while re-engineering the detention and removal system to ensure that illegal aliens are removed from the country quickly and efficiently. SBI also involves strong interior enforcement efforts, including enhanced worksite enforcement investigations and intensified efforts to track down and remove illegal aliens inside this country.

The North Enid Police Department also assisted in this case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Teresa Black prosecuted this case.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.